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EPHRAIM, THE FORTER, RECOGNIZES AN OLD FACE.

## THE GRAFTON FAMILY.

CHAPTER VII.—BREAD CAST UPON THE WATERS.

So Bertie Grafton ran away from school and lost the favour of his city patrons. No seat in the old dusty counting-house for him after such an escape. No. 91, 1853.

pade; no hope now that, in years to come, the name of Grafton would be restored to its former position, and regrafted on the flourishing firm. Bertie did not think of this, perhaps, when, like a guilty thing, he hurried on, through that short

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summer night and early morning, to receive, as he feared, his mother's last whispered blessing. Well, it may be, that he should not have run away from school; but, dear gentle reader, think of poor Bertie as favourably as you can. The fault, if fault it was, was quickly followed by its appropriate punishment.

Mr. C. was not very sorry, I think, though he *did* express his deep regret the next day, in a note to Mrs. Grafton, that her son's conduct at school, and especially his last act and deed, rendered it both unnecessary and improper that he—Mr. C.—should take any further interest in his future advancement. And Mr. Robinson, the new partner, was not very sorry either; for he had an eye on the promised desk for his son Sam. It may be, also, that Bertie was not very sorry when he opened the letter, which his mother was too ill to read, and found that thenceforward, so far as C. and Robinson were concerned, he was to be master of his own actions; and that his box of clothes and books—concerning which he had had grave doubts whether he should see them again, having given them up indeed in philosophical resignation, supposing that they would be retained in part liquidation of his last half-year's fees at "the Academic Institution"—would be punctually forwarded to the Grove by the London carrier, carriage *not* paid.

Sorrow! alas, there was one sorrow in Bertie's heart which swallowed up every smaller, meaner grief. Reader, have you ever watched by the bedside of a brother, sister, husband, wife, child, or parent, all but hopeless, yet hoping against hope, that life would be spared and health restored? And have you not felt, in that sickening anguish and agony of spirit, that if but this one prayer could be granted, how easily a double weight of mere worldly care and anxiety could be borne? What was it to Bertie Grafton, when his weeping sisters hung upon his neck, and sobbed out their orphan griefs; or when he looked upon his mother's unconscious, meaningless, restless, altered countenance, and vainly strove to call her recollection for one moment to himself, her only son; or when the physician, with pitying accents, bade him prepare himself for the worst; or when the commiserating landlady, to raise the boy's spirits, called him aside to whisper in his ears how much his poor mamma put her in mind of her own dear husband, who died, ten years ago next autumn, of just such a fever;—what was it to Bertie then, that a dark black cloud had arisen in another quarter, and that disappointment and penury seemed to be his allotted portion through life? Oh, if she might but live, how easily could these be borne; or rather, how penitently would he retrace his erring steps, where conscience told him he had erred! how resolutely he would trample down his despicable pride! how manfully he would begin the struggle of life! and how perseveringly he would thenceforward—God helping him—carry on the conflict till difficulties had vanished!

And thus, in sadness and dread, did one day after another pass away, while nothing short of actual force could have removed the boy from the infected chamber, into which none beside a hireling nurse, duly fortified with snuff and camphor, the doctor, and himself, rarely dared to intrude.

Joy, joy! The crisis is past, and the danger over. The mother knows her boy now, and puzzles herself in trying to remember when the holidays began, and puzzles Bertie too, by asking many questions which, at that time, he must not answer. Then, again, she sinks into a slumber, sweet and reviving like the sleep of infancy; and Bertie, with glad heart and streaming eyes, leaves her in charge of the snuffy nurse—but a kind clever body, in spite of snuff-box and camphor-bag—while he carries the glad tidings to Lotté and Harry: "Not motherless; not motherless! The doctor says there is hope for us. She won't die now—dear, dear, mother!"

After night comes morning; but it was not a morning without clouds that slowly dawned upon the Graftons. True, the mother was raised—miraculously, the doctor said, and marvelously, certainly—from the brink of the grave; and, as marvelously, neither Bertie nor his sisters, nor Mrs. Davis, nor Mary the maid, sickened with the fever. It was fumigation and ventilation that kept it off, Mrs. Davis said; it was snuff and camphor, the nurse said; and whether there were more or less of virtue in either of these disinfectants, the plague was stayed: only the poor canary sickened and died. Nevertheless, it was no bright hopeful day yet. Mrs. Grafton's illness had terribly diminished her slender hoard, and her occupation was gone; while poor Bertie—ah well! his mother could not find it in her heart to blame him.

And then, when strength and energy were slowly returning, came Mrs. Davis the landlady, hoping and trusting that Mrs. Grafton would not be inconvenienced; but she had some thoughts of changing her condition. Her life was very lonely, and Mr. Somebody or other, whom she had known a good many years, off and on, was very kind, and had made her a handsome offer, which she had made up her mind at last to accept. And she should soon want her first floor, she thought; and so if Mrs. Grafton—she would not hurry her on any account—but if Mrs. Grafton could suit herself with other lodgings—and so on.

There was no help for it; and, a month later, the Graftons had not only left the Grove, but had disappeared from the neighbourhood. Soon their names were almost forgotten; or if, by any accident, they were recalled to the memory of the friends of their prosperous days, it was—"Ah, poor Grafton; he did things in pretty good style: a pity he was so gay. Widow and children left badly off, very much reduced, poor things. What became of them, I wonder!"

One day, a middle-aged man entered the dusty bustling warehouse of C. and Robinson. He had the confident bearing of a man who knew his own value, commercially, and the quick bustling air of one who appreciated, to a fraction of a minute, the value of time also. But, in spite of these, there was a subdued tone, amounting almost to hesitancy, with which, after glancing around him impatiently, he addressed a young man who seemed to have some connection with the business, and demanded to speak with Mr. Grafton.

"Grafton, sir!" replied the other: "There is no one of that name here."

"I mean the Mr. Grafton of the firm," continued the stranger—"one of the partners."

"This is C. and Robinson's house," said the young man, rather loftily. "My father is Mr. Robinson, sir; if you want to see him on business, he is in the counting-house: there is no Mr. Grafton now; he died years ago."

"Ha! I hadn't heard of this; it is many years since I was in town. Dead!" he exclaimed in an accent of concern; "I did not expect this. But what of his family? Mr. Grafton was married, and had a son, I think."

"Oh yes," said the youth, and smiled knowingly; "there was a son. I knew something about him."

"Well! what about him?"

"Nothing very brilliant," replied the young man. "We went to the same school, and the young fellow was to have been taken into our house; but he took it into his head to take leg-bail, and so he lost his chance."

"And what became of him, then?" the stranger asked.

"Can't tell, sir; know nothing of him. Of course, it was nothing to our firm."

"Ha! I see. Can you tell me anything about Mrs. Grafton, then? What became of her? Where is she to be found? Do you know what her circumstances are?"

"Can't tell, I am sure, sir," replied the young man, rather tired, it appeared, of the catechetical conversation, for he turned on his heel and left the stranger to his cogitations, which were soon interrupted, however, by the approach of a warehouseman, who civilly inquired if he were a buyer.

"I am not sure," said the stranger, and then added; "No, not to-day, I believe. I came expecting to find Mr. Grafton; but he is dead, I hear. Can you give me any information about his family?"

No; the person addressed had heard of Mr. Grafton certainly, but it was before he was in the house that Mr. Grafton was a partner. He couldn't tell; perhaps Mr. Robinson could give him the information he sought.

"Robinson! wasn't he the traveller for the firm, years ago?"

Yes; the warehouseman knew that: Mr. Robinson still travelled sometimes, but he was at home now. Would the inquisitive gentleman please to step into the counting-house? he would find him there, and Mr. C. also.

An odd man, this curious stranger. He took a few steps towards the counting-house, then turned, muttered something about "no consequence—not worth while," and hurried towards the entrance-door of the warehouse. A grey-headed porter was in the way, packing up a box, over which he stooped. The porter looked up, and the stranger looked down.

"Mr. Haycraft!" exclaimed the former, with a start of surprise.

"Ha! Ephraim; you here still?" said the stranger in a low tone. "Hush! you needn't say you know me. Don't tell Mr. C. I have been in. Great changes, Ephraim, since you know when."

"Yes, sir; and none the better; 'new lords, new laws,' they say."

"So Mr. Grafton is dead?"

"Ay, sir; and his poor family—ah well, the wheel will turn round; 'tis up with you now, Mr. Haycraft, I reckon, by the looks of it."

"Pretty well for that, Ephraim; and you?"

"Much of a muchness, as it always was: stuck on to the axle, Mr. Haycraft; so 't isn't far up nor far down neither," said the old porter.

The stranger dipped his hand into his pocket, and, in less time than it takes to tell, a sovereign was in Ephraim's palm.

"Many thanks, Mr. Haycraft; I didn't mean that, though, nor wish it; but 'tis like you in old times, and I won't refuse it, trusting you won't miss it. But, sir, if you are well to do, as you seem, I won't say another word, only I am afraid the Graftons—"

"True, I want to know about them; more than half my business in town was to see Mr. Grafton; and if you can tell me anything about his family—"

"I think I can, sir, a little; but there's Mr. C. coming this way; and, somehow, he doesn't like to have the Graftons talked about; besides, if you don't want to see him—"

"True; it mightn't be pleasant: not that I should care much about it; but it may as well be avoided. But I must know something more about the Graftons: come to the—coffee-room this evening, Ephraim, and we'll have a chat together. I will be sure to be in the way;" and the speaker stepped out of the doorway into the narrow lane.

It is as true as though an alderman had said it, that there often are passages in men's lives that would not tell well for their characters if ruthlessly dragged to the light: deeds, it may be, long repented of, but which remain in memory, sticking there like burrs. "If I had had my legal deserts," said a gentleman of unspotted character and exemplary integrity, in our hearing, "I should have been transported, or might have been hung, years ago." This might be a peculiar case; and whether the speaker were strictly literal or somewhat hyperbolic in his self-condemnation, was best known to himself and ONE other. But the fact we have stated is the same. Ask that ermined judge to look back through the vista of half a century, and say whether the young criminal he has just sentenced to imprisonment be, all circumstances taken into account, more deserving of this punishment than he himself once would have been; or the fervent denouncer of vice, whether his own hands were always pure. Ask that fond and faithful husband, or that careful, watchful parent, whether there be not, in some nook and corner of his memory, transactions of ancient date, which he would not dare to reveal to the partner of his bosom, or the children of his affection. Ask any man you meet, if there be not in his recollection the dark shadow of some guilty thing of which he is now ashamed; whether there be not some human presence he uniformly seeks to shun, because that one other beside himself is cognizant of a sin or disgrace which is deeply ingrained in his history, like some dreadful secret written with sympathetic ink on paper, which needs only a simple contact with an antagonist element to bring out again the fatal handwriting, so that he who runs may read.

In a large town in one of the distant counties of

England, Mr. Haycraft stood high among its well-to-do merchants. In a comparatively short space of time, and yet, step by step, he had raised himself, by industry and integrity, combined with much native shrewdness and aided by favourable circumstances, from positive obscurity and a subordinate situation, to wealth and extraordinary influence. He had entered into business, had prospered, had married into a wealthy family, and thus extended the sphere by enlarging the means of his busy operations. He had become a public character, had filled a high municipal office with credit and renown, and, it may be, was looking to something still higher. In his private capacity he was a liberal employer and a generous friend. There was a secret in *his* history.

Subtract twenty years, or rather more, from the life of this middle-aged man, or blot them out of mind, and he is young again. In that counting-house, from which he just now turned away, he stood on one particular day—a day never to be erased from his memory—a defaulter. The proofs were as clear as daylight; and he had tremblingly confessed his guilt, and cast himself on the mercy of his employers. He had broken trust; the amount of his defalcation was large or small, according to the light in which it might be viewed; but this made no difference—the guilt of the dishonesty was the same. There were palliating circumstances, it is true. It was, he said and knew, and his employers believed it to be, his first departure from integrity: he had been suddenly and sorely tempted, and as suddenly overcome: he had intended to make secret restitution if the crime had remained undiscovered. But all this would not have saved him from an ignominious exposure, degradation, and ruin.

"This is all very well, and very pretty, sir," said Mr. C., after listening quietly to the young man's penitent confession, and passionate prayer for forbearance; "but I, for my part, make it a rule never to overlook a first offence. Keep what you have to say for another time and place; it is lost here."

The senior partner was absent; the culprit turned an appealing, supplicating look to Mr. Grafton, who had not long been a partner: the young men had formerly been companions, if not bosom friends.

"Mr. C.," said the junior partner, "let the matter drop—"

"Impossible," returned Mr. C.

"I ask it as a personal favour, sir; and will hold myself responsible for the sum Haycraft has taken."

"You don't know what you are talking about, my dear sir," replied the elder partner, blandly and coldly; "it isn't the amount, Mr. Grafton, it is the principle of the thing. I tell you, as I told Mr. Haycraft just now, I never forgive a first offence of this sort—never;" and saying this, Mr. C. left the counting-house.

There was a door, seldom used, which led from the counting-house into a small alley at the rear of the premises. The key was in the lock, and in a moment Mr. Grafton had turned it and opened the door.

"I am doing a mad thing, Haycraft," he said; "but if you remain here another minute your fate

is sealed. I know Mr. C. better than you do: make your escape while you can; and, if you get clear off, come to my house this evening:—it is your only chance," he added, seeing the young man hesitate—"go."

The culprit did not wait for another bidding, and Mr. Grafton was alone when his partner returned with the porter Ephraim and a policeman. What afterwards transpired is only to be conjectured; but as it was a principle with Mr. C. never to forgive, it is not improbable that the breach thus opened between himself and Mr. Grafton was never entirely healed. But, however this might be, the defaulter escaped, and kept the hastily-made appointment with his principal. As the friend of her husband, he was introduced to Mrs. Grafton, as she sat nursing her first-born infant son. After she had retired, the young husband wrote a note, and put it into the hands of the fugitive.

"You will not stay in London," he said; "that is out of the question. You had better start at once, by the night coach, to —. Here is a letter to Mr. —. He will either give or find employment for you. I have said no more than is needful; no one need know of your disgrace, and your character is, in a great measure, in your own hands. It is an unwise thing I am doing, perhaps; but I trust you."

The rescued man wrung his benefactor's hand. "You shall never have cause to repent this kindness," he said.

An hour or two later and Haycraft was on the coach, equipped for the journey, and replenished in purse, by the generosity of his young employer. Once after that they met; and Mr. Grafton was able to congratulate himself that, for once, he had acted from impulse against the dictates of his better judgment, or rather of mercantile caution. With him had died his share of the secret.

We restore the twenty years, and Mr. Haycraft is again a middle-aged, prosperous man. Evening is come, and he is in deep conference with old Ephraim.

It wasn't his business, the grey-headed porter said; but it was plain enough that, when poor Mr. Grafton died—and sorry enough he was, whatever others might be—there were sad changes in his family. Wasn't there the sale? and didn't the widow have to go into lodgings? He knew something about it, for the next Christmas, or thereabouts, he was sent there with a parcel from the old gentleman, the senior partner, and then he asked a few questions of the woman of the house, as was natural; and he was told that poor Mrs. Grafton had to go out every day, rain or shine, teaching; and would she have done that if she hadn't been poor? Then, there was master Bertie; it wasn't any secret that he had been sent to school by the firm because his mother was too poor to pay for it herself; and he would have been cared for further, no doubt, if the old gentleman hadn't retired from business; for though he was rough-spoken, and was a good deal under Mr. C.'s influence, he had a kindly feeling towards poor Mr. Grafton's family; but his going away made all the difference.

"But I understood from the youth I spoke to that young Grafton misbehaved himself at school, and thus lost the favour of the partners."



"All a bag of moonshine, Mr. Haycraft, begging your pardon. The boy heard, and true enough it was, by all accounts, that his mother was ill, and like to die; and when he begged and prayed to be let go to see her, his master wouldn't listen to it, and so he just took what you used to call French leave, Mr. Haycraft. That's the long and short of it; and no great harm neither, I think. But it just did as an excuse for casting him off; and if there hadn't been that, in my opinion there would have been some other reason found."

"And since then—for that must have been some time ago—"

"Six years, Mr. Haycraft."

"Well, after that, what became of the boy and his mother and sisters? The poor widow did not die, I trust?"

"No, sir, I heard that she got well again; for one day, I was out that way, and thinks I, I'll call and ask about the family, as I had been there before; and then I was told that they had left that part of London altogether, and were as poor as poor could well be, the woman of the house where they lodged was afraid; and a nice decent-spoken woman she was, though she seemed in some sort of trouble herself, I thought; but that was no business of mine."

It was not much more that Ephraim had to tell, except that, after much research in a huge, bloated, time-blackened, leather-bound repository—something resembling a memorandum book, which Mr. Haycraft dimly remembered as part and parcel of the old porter—the direction of Mrs. Davis was recovered; and thither, the next morning, Mr. Haycraft hurried, to gain, if possible, additional intelligence respecting the past history and present retreat of his benefactor's family.

### THE ROOF OF THE WORLD.

THE "world's end" is a title somewhat commonly applied with us to strange out-of-the-way places, where nature's aspect is unmistakably wild and desolate, bare rocks forming the surface and protruding from it in uncouth masses, unenlivened by the appearance of verdure, unoccupied by the song-birds, and rarely conversant for any lengthened period with the presence of man. We have visited two or three sites of this description, locally distinguished by the epithet mentioned, apparently doomed by dreariness, unconquerable sterility, stern and savage features, to be for ever cut off from the economy of social life. The phrase has travelled with the race and language to far remote districts, and been attached to corresponding places beyond the Atlantic and behind the blue mountains of Australia. But we are only aware of one instance of the application of the title at the head of this paper. It refers to no imaginary region, but to a physical reality; nor is it in the slightest degree a fantastic denomination. The roof of a dwelling, with its overtopping chimneys, is its highest point, and forms a water-parting, the rain dripping off from it in opposite directions. Such is the *Bam-i-duniah*, or "Roof of the World," the local name of a portion of Central or High Asia, otherwise called the table-land of Pamir. This is an elevated plain, at the height of 15,600 feet

above the sea, which appears to be the highest in Asia of the same extent, or in any part of our globe.

The locality is a remarkable one, dreary in its aspect, and hard to climb, on account of the elevation, the encumbering snows, and steep declivities; while it is also difficult for the stranger to reach, owing to the rarefaction of the atmosphere. Still it is occupied by various forms of animal and vegetable life, and is annually for a time the residence of a native wandering people. The snow lies deep upon the "Roof" through the greater part of the year, but disappears in summer, though masses remain unmelted in hollows and shaded places. During this season, the spot is a favourite resort of the wandering Kirghis, for the pasturing of their cattle. The short grass which then clothes the surface is so rich that their horses are quickly brought into good condition; and its nourishing qualities are evidenced in the productiveness of their ewes, which almost invariably bring forth two lambs at a birth. In the depth of winter they retire into the sheltered valleys at lower levels. A fine sheet of water also lies on the table-land. This is the Sir-i-Kol, the loftiest lake on the surface of the globe.

Marco Polo, the Venetian traveller, in the last half of the thirteenth century, traversed the region on his remarkable oriental tour, and has left accurate notices of it in the account of his journey. He particularly observed, without understanding the cause, that fire did not burn with the same vivacity and strength as in other places, neither did it cook victuals so well. He was the first to point out this circumstance, which has been verified by others at high elevations, and is doubtless the effect of the rarefaction of the air. He also mentions a species of sheep, the enormous horns of which the natives applied to various purposes, especially to piling them up in large quantities along the road, for the guidance of travellers in winter, when it is covered with snow. The astonishing size of the horns, and the practice of converting them into guide-posts, have been noticed by a very recent visitor. They appear to belong to an animal between the goat and the sheep.

For five centuries and a half from the date of the Venetian's visit, we have no record of any European reaching the spot, till lieutenant John Wood, after surmounting innumerable difficulties and dangers, stood, to use the native expression, on the "Roof of the World," and beheld the expanse of the lake Sir-i-Kol stretched out before him, covered with thick ice, the infant and classical river Oxus issuing from it. This was on the 19th of February, 1838, at five o'clock in the afternoon. He ascended by the valley of the river from Bokhara, accompanied by a party of natives. On approaching its source, the snow lay deeper and deeper every step in advance, for the winter season added immensely to the difficulty of the undertaking. Two hours were occupied in forcing a passage over a field of snow not five hundred yards in extent. Each horse of the party took the lead by turns, and struggled onwards till exhaustion brought it down, when it was allowed to rest, while another took its place. On Mr. Wood attempting to proceed more rapidly over a favourable site, a guide seized the bridle of his horse, and

cautioned him against the "wind of the mountain," alluding to the highly rarefied air, which speedily arrests exertion. Wishing to ascertain the depth of the Sir-i-Kol, he tried to make an opening in the ice, but found the slightest muscular effort too exhausting to proceed. Half a dozen strokes of the axe prostrated the workman; and though a few minutes' respite sufficed to restore the breath, anything like continued labour was impossible. A short run made the runner gasp; the pulse throbbed at a fearful rate; the voice was sensibly affected; and conversation in a loud tone was too painful to be maintained.

The yak or *kúh-gáu* (mountain cow) delights in this high region, thrives in the cold, and finds the climate most congenial to its constitution, on the very border of the perpetual snow-line. This interesting and little-known animal belongs to the ox species. It stands about three feet and a half high, and sweeps the ground with a bushy tail. Long hair streams down its dew-lap and fore-legs, giving it, but for its horns, the appearance of a huge Newfoundland dog. It occurs both wild and domesticated, and is as valuable to the Kirghis as the reindeer to the Laplander. The milk is richer than that of the common cow, though the yield is less; the flesh supplies food; the strong pliant hair is made into ropes, woven into mats, and with the hide is used for articles of dress; the horns serve for drinking-vessels; and the long bushy tail is the *chowry* of India, the fan of the grandees. In addition to these uses, the yak is a beast of burden, and is preferred to the horse for riding on the difficult highlands, as more sure-footed and sagacious. Mr. Wood first saw the animal on his way up the valley of the Oxus. It was standing before a door, with its bridle in the hand of a Kirghis boy. "There was something," he observes, "so novel in the sight that I could not resist the impulse of mounting so strange a steed, but in doing so met with a stout resistance from the little fellow who had it in charge. In the middle of our dispute the boy's mother made her appearance, and very kindly permitted me to try the animal's paces. It bore a light saddle, with horn stirrups; a cord let through the cartilage of the nose served for a bridle." Where a man must step cautiously and slowly, the yak will go safely at full gallop, avoiding hidden chasms with admirable sagacity, or dexterously overleaping them. When pursuing an untried path, one of these animals is driven in advance as a pioneer, to ascertain the dangers and practicability of the road. Should a sudden fall of snow choke up passages in the highlands, a herd sent a-head will soon clear the way by treading down the snow. When it lies deep upon the herbage, the yak pushes it off, by rolling himself down the slopes. He will then eat his way up again, and in the same manner make another groove in the snow, to repeat the browze.

As the nearest line of communication between great districts of Central Asia, the western part of the Chinese empire, and Turkestan, the table-land of Pamir is a commercial route, annually traversed, notwithstanding its difficulties. Having gained its high level from the west, or from Bokhara, the Chinese territory is entered, and a few days' journey brings the merchant to Yarkand, a frontier position of the empire. The inhabitants are Turkomans

and Mohammedans, who conduct their own government, while Chinese officers collect the revenues and guard the country from foreign intrusion. The usual journey by caravan to Peking occupies a period of five months; but in great emergencies expresses are sent in little more than one month, by relays of horses; and intelligence has been transmitted to the seat of government in six days, by means of piles of wood, placed at certain stages, which are directed to be set on fire, on any insurrectionary movement breaking out. Tea, and other productions of China, are forwarded to Yarkand, and disposed of to the natives of Bokhara, who are permitted to come thither for the purpose. But they are rigorously restricted in their movements, and placed under strict surveillance. Sir A. Burnes mentions the instance of one of his own servants, who had formerly crossed this part of the frontier, and exposed himself to the suspicion of the authorities. After a confinement of some months, he was dismissed by the route he had come, but not till his likeness had been taken. Several copies of this picture were despatched to the frontier towns, with the following laconic instructions:—"If this man enters the country, his head is the emperor's, his property is yours." "I need not add," says Burnes, "that he has never since sought to extend his acquaintance in the Chinese province of Yarkand." But here, as at other points, the exclusive empire will be compelled to loosen the rein, and submit to freer intercourse with the outlying nations, should it escape the complete disruption which at present threatens it from its own subjects.

Besides its snow and ice, travelling merchants, nomadic hordes, and agile yaks, the Roof of the World has its cemetery, illustrative of the common lot of man, whether a mountain or a lowland dweller. A rough-looking building decked out with horns of the wild sheep, and all but hidden in the snow, arrested the attention of lieutenant Wood. It was the last home of many a wandering Kirghis, and lay a little out of the line of road pursued by the traveller. On coming abreast of it, the leading horseman of the party, who chanced to be of the same tribe, pulled up and dismounted. His companions followed him, and, wading through the deep drift, reached a tombstone, the top of which was uncovered. Before this they knelt, all encumbered as they were with their huge forked matchlocks strapped to their backs, and offered up prayers to the Almighty. The whole of the company involuntarily stopped till they had finished. The stillness of the scene, the solitariness and wintry aspect of the waste, with the almost entire absence of all animated nature, rendered the spectacle highly impressive and suggestive of salutary thoughts to the reflecting mind.

#### LOOK OUT!

THE importance of a phrase or a sentence is not always to be measured by its length. There are some sentences very lengthy and pretentious, that convey after all but a very homoeopathic idea. Other sentences are characterised by force and brevity rather than elegance; they are short, sharp, and bustling, and strike you by their pithy

embodiment of a thought that might be diluted and spread over any extent of letter-press. The one may boast of elegance and elaboration; the other has little to boast of but its force and fervour—qualities, by the way, not to be despised by those who seek to convey thought in written or verbal language.

It would be a curious subject of speculative inquiry to ascertain the changes and modifications a thought may undergo, in the form of its expression, by different classes of persons in different circles of society. In one class, it would be uttered in an ornate and florid style, embellished by apt illustration, classical quotation, and brilliant rhetoric. In another, it would be expressed in perfectly *exact* language, every word well chosen and set admirably in its proper place. In another, it would be advanced diffidently and deferentially, and prefaced by a "perhaps," the native politeness of the speaker militating against positiveness of assertion. In a fourth class, it would be condensed, as by the action of a high-pressure engine, into the smallest possible dimensions, to be fired off at you with the force and effect of a rifle-ball. What the elegant scholar or refined lady would express in quite a lengthened and formal sentence, the matter-of-fact policeman condenses into a gruff "Move on." While the carriage auditors at the hustings are enraptured with the elegant flow of language and felicity of illustration exhibited by the newly-elected M.P., in explaining to his constituents the abstruse science of political economy, a grimy voter in the crowd, in paper cap and shirt-sleeves, condenses the whole, for the benefit of his neighbours, into a single sentence of a dozen words.

Of a very large family of familiar phrases, current as "household words" in the mouths of men, we do not remember to have met with one more frequently than the injunction to "look out!" It is, to say the least of it, expressive; and it saves some breath and not a little time—valuable commodities in these days. You visit an acquaintance in town; and, on going forth into the public streets, your business-like friend cautions you to "look out;" meaning thereby—take care of your pockets. You reach a crossing, and are again told to "look out"—quite unnecessarily, you think; for you find it imperative to do so if you would get to the other side of the street. Seizing a favourable opportunity, you dodge between the omnibus past and the omnibus to come, to find yourself in contact with the nose of a cabman's horse, and hear the expostulation of the driver, uttered in the tones of injured innocence, "Why can't that 'ere gen'lman look out?" Escaped that peril, and glancing around you, you plant your foot on the opposite kerb-stone, alighting in your eagerness on the toe of a lady waiting to cross, and are accosted in shrilly accents with, "Really, I wish *some people* would look out!" A print-shop near at hand attracts your attention, and you find yourself for the hundredth time earnestly contemplating the portrait of the great Duke, when a burly porter blunders against you, nearly prostrating you on the pavement; and on being remonstrated with, he explains indignantly to the by-standers, as though an apology were due from you, that "the gentleman wasn't a-looking out!"

Somewhat discomposd, you pass on, your natu-

ral amiability having been by this time largely tried; and for awhile you get on smoothly enough, when you catch a confused clamour of voices shouting in the distance, "Look out, look out!" Suiting the action to the word, you behold a Smithfield bullock madly careering through the crowded street. This time you think the admonition sensible and reasonable, and escape with all speed. Leaving the crush of the crowded thoroughfares, you take, perchance, a turn in the park, and have scarcely succeeded in recovering your equanimity, when a fussy old gentleman at your elbow pokes you in the ribs, exclaiming excitedly, for your especial benefit, the magic words, "Look out, look out!" explaining them by adding instantly the name of our gracious queen. As in loyalty bound, you rush to secure a good position by the time she passes. You become quite absorbed and enthusiastic, and turn homewards, that last stroke of good fortune having quite satisfied you with your morning's walk.

Removing your hat in the hall, you find how freely you are perspiring, and seek in vain in all the pockets you possess for the wherewith to chase the moisture from your brow. It is gone; that is quite clear: you think you have dropped it, and yet you do not usually lose such articles. You think again that you have been *eased* of it, and you wonder where, and by whom; but you suddenly remember the cunning face of one of those old-looking boys you meet with in London and no where else, and how he particularly urged you to "look out" in an opposite direction, and are quite satisfied it was not lost in the way you at first supposed.

These are just a few of the instances in which an important meaning, that might suitably occupy a compound paragraph, is not unfrequently conveyed in the bustling, business-like, self-important phrase, "look out!" It has its own value, however; and apart from the trite and vulgar use familiar to us in every-day life, few phrases carry with them a greater amount of moral force, and a sententious sentiment of more universal application, than this. These two little words often epitomise, in the mouth of a business man, a whole volume of homiletics. We see, for instance, the man of few words conveying to his son, on leaving home to enter life, all the parental advice which maternal solicitude had scattered over several preceding weeks, in that one curt utterance, "look out." We see, too, occasionally, a city man who is bored every night by the complaints of his wife of the manners, habits, morals, and faults of "those horrid servants," as they are too often unjustly called, and whose establishment is in a perpetual ferment through the incessant soldings of the mistress. How quickly and quietly, when the nuisance reaches a certain climax, will the "head of the house" reduce all to peace and order by the use of the single phrase, "look out;" though in this case we confess this magic sentence should only be used in the last extremity.

"Look out," like everything else useful and good, may be *abused*, and is often employed by the selfish as the term by which to designate a course of low cunning; it may also, however, be *used* with advantage to "point a moral" as well as to "adorn a tale."



That youth, who five years ago left his comfortable home happy, ardent, and virtuous, to enter on the "battle of life" in the metropolis, and who is now sunk and degraded into a blasphemer and a debauchee, would never have ruined himself, body and soul, had he acted on the advice given him to "look out." That noble fellow, to whose manly spirit you were wont to look up for guidance, and whose genius you thought to be sublime, and who is now the brilliant, bad centre of a sottish circle of boon-companions, would never have reached his depth of degradation had he been on the "look-out" when sinners enticed, and when the wine-cup was nigh. That ruined trader and outlawed bankrupt, hiding his guilty head in holes and corners, might now have been an alderman of London, had he kept a prudent and proper "look-out" in his transactions with others. That minister of religion, too, who was set as a "watchman" to "look out" for the lost and wretched, the straying and the strayed, would not have covered himself with the deep disgrace of an inconsistent and immoral life, had he been keeping a proper "look-out" as to the concerns of his own inner nature. Need we multiply illustrations? We think not. If anything more were necessary to induce our readers to be, in the best sense, on the "look-out" for their highest interests for time and eternity, it would only be to hint, that every unit of all that dreary company, who at the last shall "suffer the bitter pangs of the second death," might have stood "without fault before the throne," had they, when warned in their hour of danger, reverently and promptly obeyed the injunction—"Look out!"

#### BANKS OF THE THAMES.

##### VIII.—FROM WALTON TO RUNNYMEDE.

WE recommence our voyage at the point where we last broke off in our description. We do not now come anywhere upon any of those grand objects which excite the imagination, and we meet with few even which in themselves might be called very beautiful; and yet, altogether, as one glides along, they do touch us with a charm which every lover of nature confesses to be indescribable. We pass by Sunbury and soon reach Walton, not without admiring the noble cedar-trees in the former village, which break the flat uniformity of this portion of the river-banks. The bridge at Walton is remarkable for its extreme length, rather than anything else; but if we land here, and walk a little way up the road towards the village on the left hand, we have towards the west a very beautiful view indeed of the bendings of the river, and of the open country, diversified by meadows, fields, and trees which spread beyond it. There are some good, handsome buildings at Walton, especially Ashley House, in the Tudor style, and Lord Tankerville's villa, from a design by Barry, the architect of the houses of parliament.

Among the ancient inhabitants of the village may be mentioned admiral Rodney, and the famous Bradshaw who presided at the trial of Charles I. And further, it may be remarked, that the eccentric astrologer, William Lilly, sometimes called the English Merlin, lived and died here, and is buried in the church. The building is old, and has no

thing to recommend it in the way of architectural beauty; but it contains some curiosities which may be worth a brief notice. There is a curious brass in this church, with the engraving of a man riding on a stag, and plunging a knife into the animal's neck. It relates to a circumstance which occurred in the reign of queen Elizabeth. She was once hunting in Oatlands Park, when Selwyn, the game-keeper, exhibited before her majesty divers exploits of skill and prowess, and, among other feats, leapt from his horse upon the back of a stag, while both were running at the top of their speed. Guiding the frightened creature into the royal presence, he plunged his knife into the stag's throat, so that it fell dead at the queen's feet, much to the admiration and joy of that celebrated personage, who had a great taste for achievements of that sort, and could herself dexterously use the knife, which it is reported she used to do in Windsor Park, when she came in at the death, killing the deer as an act indicative of her royal supremacy.

Walton church also contains one of those strange instruments with which our ancestors used to punish those dames who were too free with the use of their tongues. They were called hanks, or gossip's bridles, and were intended to enclose the head, being fastened behind by a padlock, and having attached to it a small piece of iron which literally "held the tongue." Thus accoutred, the unhappy culprit was marched through the village till she gave unequivocal signs of repentance and humiliation. There is also a monument in the church, by Roubiliac, to the memory of Richard Boyle, lord Shannon, who distinguished himself by his bravery at the battle of the Boyne.

Antiquaries will pause a little beyond Walton Bridge, as there lies the spot which Camden points out as the scene of Cæsar's crossing the Thames. The illustrious general, in his *Commentaries*, informs us that this circumstance took place about eighty Roman miles from the mouth of the river, that the opposite shore was fortified by the natives with pointed stakes driven into the channel, and that the Roman cavalry forded the stream, the legions following with their heads just above the water. Camden identifies Coway Stakes, for so this spot is called, as the point where the army crossed, inasmuch as here the river is shallow; and there were actually large stakes found driven into the earth, while the distance from the sea is about the same as Cæsar mentions. Another antiquary, Gales, confirms the opinion of Camden, by alleging that he examined the stakes which remained in his time, and that they were hard as ebony, from long exposure to the water, and were about the thickness of a man's thigh. This he shows to be in agreement with Bede's account, who says they were to be seen in his day, and were exactly of such dimensions, and were, moreover, cased with lead. None of these relics now exist; but the people of Walton remember them well enough, as the last was not removed more than sixteen years ago, and they say that the stakes were capped with metal.

A very pleasant row it is from Walton to Shepperton. Looking back, we have sloping hills on the Surrey side, with a portion of Oatlands Park, which here is decidedly beautiful. Houses on the Middlesex bank of the river forming the little village street of Halleford, with vehicles passing to



and fro, and barges moored alongside, make a pretty picture. Approaching Shepperton, we are struck with some pleasure-grounds and gardens, which touch the water's edge, and are of the richest emerald green and fringed with the brightest of flowers, with trees overshadowing the water, and a boat-house at the end canopied by graceful willows. These little villa pictures are common enough on the banks of the Thames, and serve to relieve views which, without them, would become monotonous. Shepperton Deep is well known to anglers as spaces in the river where no nets or drags are ever used, rod and line being the only instruments allowed for catching the finny tribe. They are, in fact, fish-preserves, and are allotted to the village as its special domain. On crossing these Deepes, the scene all around is flat, except at certain points on the Surrey side; but opposite, you get a good view of Oatlands Park, and of the mansion peeping out from among the trees. The village of Shepperton is distinguished by having been for awhile the residence of the learned Grocyn and his friend Erasmus; and in the parish churchyard there is one of the most curious epitaphs we ever met with. It is to the memory of a negro and his wife, and is composed in Latin. We cannot give the whole, but the following portion, in reference to the man, we will venture to transcribe:—

"Here, in a foreign land, quietly repose the bones of Benjamin Blake. Scatter a little earth upon his grave; thou hast nothing else to do; and if a tear steals down thy cheek, be not ashamed of it, for below reposes a servant quicker than Davus, more humorous than Sancho, more watchful than Argus. From the Isle of Colombo, voyaging across the pathless ocean, he followed his master to these shores, where, unlike most men, he found only change of soil and climate, preserving here, as elsewhere, the same honest principles, the same devoted attachment to his master, and the same prompt obedience. Go to Mauritania, reader, learn duty of an Ethiopian, and know that virtue inhabiteth skins of other colours than thine own." The virtues of the wife are set forth in similar eulogistic terms.

Weybridge lies on the Surrey bank, while Shepperton occupies the Middlesex side, and the river here winds so much that less than half a mile's walk brings you to a point which is four times that distance by water. The village of Weybridge is close to Oatlands, already mentioned more than once. It is now the property of the earl of Ellesmere, and was formerly a royal demesne. Henry the Eighth became possessed of the property by a forced purchase, and it is said Elizabeth here shot with the cross-bow. Charles granted the manor to his queen Henrietta, and here their young son was born, called, from the circumstance, Henry of Oatlands. The palace had three courts in the time of Elizabeth, and was in the same style of architecture as Hampton Court. After the restoration, the queen mother recovered possession of it. It passed through many hands till it became the property of the late duke of York, who rebuilt the mansion, after it had been burnt down during his absence in Flanders. The duchess resided here till her death in 1820, when she was buried in the old parish church, and a stone column was erected in the village, in commemoration of her benevolence

and other virtues, by the grateful inhabitants who had witnessed her bounty.

Another distinguished personage must now be mentioned amongst those who are sleeping here in the dust of the earth. Just beyond the village, in a little Roman catholic chapel within the grounds of the late Mr. Taylor, repose the remains of Louis Philippe, the ex-king of the French. During his residence at Claremont, which is in the neighbourhood, he attended this place of worship, and in a vault connected with it his family wished that his coffin should be placed. As we looked at the simple spot, and the poor little edifice which covers it—pointed out to us by a humble village carpenter, who told us he made the monarch's coffin—we could not help recollecting, in contrast with it, a visit we paid some time ago to St. Denis, near Paris, the gorgeous burial-place of the line of sovereigns who preceded this member of the house of Orleans on the throne of France. But, very likely, such a contrast will exist only for a time. It did not seem probable, just after Napoleon's death, that ever his lowly grave at St. Helena would be exchanged for a mausoleum in his old capital. With the memory of all the changes which France has undergone, it appears now by no means improbable, that some day these royal remains will be removed from the land of exile, to be entombed in splendour with the dust of his ancestors.

Weybridge, as well as Shepperton, is a place devoted to angling. The little inns are full of signs and emblems of the piscatory art, and here and there, on the water, may be seen the punt with its double moorings, and that most unpicturesque of sights, which we think would have shocked the venerable Isaak Walton—a man sitting in a tall-backed chair, lazily holding a rod, and handing it over every now and then for some attendant to look at and re-bait the hook, or re-adjust the line. We are no anglers, but we do protest against this unscientific, unartistic, unsportsmanlike way of following the fisher's craft. The boatmen, of course, are full of information respecting all Waltonian matters, and the one who rowed us up from Shepperton to Chertsey related some curious facts with regard to fish which have been found in the Thames. Salmon used to be plentiful hereabouts. Even after the weirs were put up, they would come as high as this to spawn, and might be seen making their well-known leaps when they reached these obstructions in their course. In illustration of the circumstance, that salmon cannot live and thrive very long in fresh water without injury, he told us that his father had often seen one, which had not returned at the usual time with its companions, left dead in this neighbourhood, and that while alive, the fish, as he said, lost "flesh" by continuing here. He entered into an explanation of what he considered to be the cause of their no longer frequenting the Thames, and stated that, in his opinion, it was the filthy state of the water near London, especially as it arose from the refuse of gas-works and other chemical matters poured in the stream. He talked about the steamers, too, as disturbing the visitors; but how far his philosophy of the fact is admissible we are unable to judge. He mentioned also, that about forty years ago a sturgeon was caught between Chertsey and Laleham, and that the men who met

with this rare kind of sport were obliged to lash the captive to their boats by lines fastened in his gills, the fish being much too large for them to carry! A porpoise, too, he stated, was once taken at Twickenham.

Proceeding through the lock at Weybridge, we come upon another part of the river, where Shepperton-range, tenanted by fine fat cows, forms a broad flat border on the one hand, and the meadows and grounds of Mr. Locke King a boundary on the other. St. Anne's Hill rises very nobly in the distance to the left, and Cooper's Hill near Runnymede is seen a little to the right. The views in this part are pleasant from the river, but we prefer them greatly as they are caught from the road, which runs near the water-side.

It is not far now to Chertsey. There stands the old bridge ahead of us. The town is a mile distant, but the church is seen lifting up its tower above neighbouring trees. The monastery which once stood there was very famous; but scarcely any remains of it are now to be found. A portion of wall, a gateway, and some pavement, are the only relics existing of this celebrated establishment. Hither was brought the body of Henry VI before its interment at Windsor. It was conveyed in a barge lighted by torches. "As one reads the account in the old historians, that barge with its royal corpse gliding along the silent highway of the Thames, and shedding on the waters a melancholy light, passes before the imagination—an emblem of fallen greatness, and rich in moral lessons of the vanity of this world." The learned Dr. Hammond was a native of Chertsey, and Laurence Tonson, a distinguished scholar of Elizabeth's time and the author of a version of the New Testament in English, is buried there; but the chief name connected with the place is that of the poet Cowley, who came to live in the town, full of poetic dreams of the beauties and felicity of retirement; but it appears from his history that he did not realize what he anticipated, and that before he had been here long he died from a cold caught in his own favourite fields. Stukely, a hundred years ago, describes a summer-house and a seat under a sycamore tree as relics connected with the poet, and he also alludes to fishponds of his making. There are now hardly any veritable mementoes of the bard in existence, though a house called his may still be seen. It goes by the name of the Porch House, from a porch which stood before it inscribed with an epitaph written by Cowley for himself; but the porch is gone, and the building otherwise considerably altered.

St. Anne's Hill is near Chertsey, and as we look on it from the river-side, we cannot help thinking of the great statesman, Charles James Fox, who made it his favourite retreat amidst the storms of political life, and might be found, after some fierce debate, sitting on a haycock with a book in his hand, "and watching the jays stealing the cherries."

A name especially dear to us of this generation, for his sincere and earnest character, and for his influence on education, occurs in connection with the little village of Laleham, not far from Chertsey. Laleham and Arnold are names henceforth united, for here he kept school in his early days, and, on leaving it, spoke of the deep love he bore for dear

old Laleham. "Who," asks one of his pupils, "that ever had the happiness of being at Laleham, does not remember the lightness and joyousness of heart with which he would romp and play in the garden, or plunge with a boy's delight into the Thames, or the merry fun with which he would battle with spears with his pupils." "Often," says his biographer, "he would revisit Laleham, and delighted himself in renewing his acquaintance with all the families of the poor whom he had known during his residence; in showing to his children his former haunts, in looking once again on his favourite views of the great plan of Middlesex—the lovely walks along the quiet banks of the Thames—the retired garden, with its 'Campus Martius' and its wilderness of trees, which lay behind his house, and which had been the scenes of so many sportive games and serious conversations—together with the churchyard of Laleham, then doubly dear to him as containing the graves of his infant child, whom he buried there in 1832, and of his mother, his aunt, and his sister Susannah, who had long formed almost a part of his own domestic circle, and whom he lost within a few years after his departure to Rugby." These extracts add moral charms to the simple scenery of this portion of the Thames, which we must confess, for our part, are most deeply affecting.

Leaving Laleham, we come next to Staines, whose graceful bridge is an ornament to the river; while the town, though still not deficient in activity and public spirit, does not present those signs of bustle and prosperity which twenty years ago were so visible, when crowds of coaches and carriages every day passed through it. A stone in a green meadow near the bridge, on the further side, bears the inscription, "God preserve the city of London, A.D. 1285." It marks the western boundary of the jurisdiction of the metropolis, in reference to the river; but the date it bears is rather an idle vaunt than a true record of the measure of antiquity pertaining to the dominion of the great civic body of London over this her far-famed river. Between Staines and Runnymede, the banks of the stream have nothing to recommend them; but when we come to the bend near Runnymede, the woods of Ankerwyke on the right, and Cooper's Hill on the left, form a view of exceeding beauty, which we have paused again and again to gaze on and admire. Egham lies out of our way, and has nothing in it for us to go after, unless we had time to reach Englefield Green, and to have a glance, by the way, at the noble prospect stretching over the county of Surrey. The prospect, too, from Cooper's Hill, of Windsor and the neighbourhood, is of the most magnificent description, associated as it is with the poetry of Pope, and with those lines, so applicable to the river as seen from that point, and really as flowing as the current he invoked:—

"Oh, could I flow like thee, and make thy stream  
My great example as it is my theme;  
Though deep yet clear, though gentle yet not dull;  
Strong without rage, without o'erflowing, full."

Every Englishman is familiar with the associations of Runnymede. Here one sees the camp of the barons, with their mailed armour and their proud war-horses, and their knights and bowmen; and here we seem to follow the leaders into the

presence of one of the unworthiest of princes, to witness them as they extort from his tyrannical hand the signature which confirmed the great charter of English security and freedom. It is now proposed to erect a monument commemorative of the event, and a controversy has arisen as to the proper site: some contending that the document was signed on what is now called Magna Charta Island; others, that it was ratified on the mainland. The fact, not unlikely, was, that the river then pursued a somewhat different course, that it chiefly flowed on the further side of what is now Magna Charta Island, and that only a narrow stream came between it and the spacious mead of which it might be said to form a part.

At this point we must finish our sketches of the Banks of the Thames, at least for the present, intending, however, some day to visit Windsor Castle, whose neighbourhood we have reached. We conclude our excursion, on ground dear to the hearts of Englishmen, with the earnest prayer that the liberties, of which the germs were planted by the memorable act on Runnymede, may ever flourish in beauty and strength, watered by that noble river of truth and love and righteousness, of which the Gospel is the fountain-head, and of which the Thames, or any other of the noble streams which God has caused to water our earth, can be but an imperfect type.

#### A WOLF STORY.

THE "Delhi Gazette" for September, 1852, contains the following curious narrative, the truth of which it unhesitatingly asserts:—

"About seven years ago, a trooper in attendance on Rajah Hurdut Sing, of Bondee, on the left bank of the Ghagra river in the Bahraetch district, was passing near a small stream which flows into that river, when he saw two wolf cubs and a boy drinking in the stream. He had a man with him on foot, and they managed to seize the boy, who appeared to be about ten years of age. He took him up on the pommel of his saddle, but he was so wild and fierce that he tore the trooper's clothes, and bit him severely in several places, though he had tied his hands together. He brought him to Bondee, where the Rajah had him tied up in his artillery gun-shed, and gave him raw flesh to eat; but he several times cut his ropes and ran off; and, after three months, the Rajah got tired of him and let him go. He was then taken by a Cashmeer mimic, or comedian, who fed and took care of him for six months; but, at the end of that time, he also got tired of him—for his habits were filthy—and let him go to wander about the Bondee bazaar. One day, he ran off with a joint of meat from a butcher's shop, and soon after upset some things in the shop of a *bunnee*, who, having a bow at hand, let fly an arrow at him. The arrow penetrated the boy's thigh. At this time, Sanaollah, a Cashmeer merchant of Lucknow, was at Bondee, selling some shawl goods to the Rajah, on the occasion of his brother's marriage. He had many servants with him, and among them one called Janoo, a lad, and an old man named Ramzan Khan. Janoo took compassion upon the poor boy, extracted the arrow from

his thigh, had his wound dressed, and prepared a bed for him under the mango tree, where he himself lodged, but kept him tied to a tent-pin. The youth would, at that time, eat nothing but raw flesh. To wean him from this custom, Janoo, with the consent of his master, gave him rice and pulse to eat. The lad rejected them for several days, and ate nothing; but Janoo persevered, and, by degrees, made him eat the balls of rice which he prepared for him; he was, however, fourteen or fifteen days in bringing him to do this. The odour from his body was very offensive, and Janoo accordingly had him rubbed with mustard seed soaked in water, after the oil had been taken from it, in the hope of removing this smell. He continued this for some months, and fed him upon rice, pulse, and flour bread; but the odour did not leave him. The boy had hardened marks upon his knees and elbows, from having gone on all fours. In about six weeks after he had been tied up under the tree, with a good deal of beating, and rubbing of his joints with oil, he was made to stand and walk upon his legs, like other human beings. He was never heard to utter more than one articulate sound, and that was 'Aboodee,' the name of the little daughter of the Cashmeer mimic, who had treated him with kindness, and for whom he had shown some kind of attachment. In about four months he began to understand and obey signs. He was, by means of them, made to prepare the hookah, put lighted charcoal upon the tobacco, and bring it to Janoo, or present it to whomsoever he pointed out.

"One night, while the boy was lying under the tree, near Janoo, the latter saw two wolves come up stealthily and smell at the boy. They then touched him, and he got up; and, instead of being frightened, the boy put his hands upon their heads, and they began to play with him. They capered around him, and he threw straw and leaves at them. Janoo tried to drive them off, but could not, and became much alarmed; and he called out to the sentry over the guns, Meer Akbar Allee, and told him that the wolves were going to eat the boy; but when he saw them begin to play together, his fears subsided, and he kept quiet. Gaining confidence, by degrees he drove them away; but, after going a little distance, they returned, and began to play again with the boy. At last he succeeded in driving them off altogether. Janoo thought that they must have been the two cubs with which the boy was first found, and that they were prevented from seizing him by recognising the smell. They licked his face with their tongues as he put his hands on their heads.

"Soon after, his master, Sanaollah, returned to Lucknow, and threatened Janoo to turn him out of his service unless he let go the boy. He persisted, however, in taking the boy with him, and his master relented. He had a string tied to his arm, and led him along by it, and put a bundle of clothes on his head. As they passed a jungle, the boy would throw down the bundle, and try to run into the jungle; but, on being beaten, he would put up his hands in supplication, take up the bundle, and go on; but he seemed soon to forget the beating, and did the same thing at almost every jungle they came through. By degrees he became quite docile. Janoo was one day, about three



months after their return to Lucknow, sent away by his master for a day or two on some business, and before his return the boy had gone off, and he could never find him again. About two months after the boy had gone, a woman, of the weaver caste, came with a letter from a relation of the Rajah Hurdut Sing, to Sanaollah, stating that she resided in the village of Chureyrakotra, on his estate, and had had her son, then about four years of age, taken from her, about five or six years before, by a wolf; and, from the description which she gave of him, he, the Rajah's relation, thought he must be the boy whom his servant, Janoo, took away with him. She said that her boy had two marks upon him: one on the chest, of a boil, and one of something else, on the forehead; and as these marks corresponded precisely with those found upon the boy, neither she nor they had any doubt that he was her lost son. She remained for four months with the merchant Sanaollah, and Janoo his khidmutgar, at Lucknow; but the boy could not be found, and she returned home, praying that information might be sent to her should he be discovered. Sanaollah, Janoo, and Ramzan Khan," continues the correspondent of the "Delhi Gazette," "are still at Lucknow, and before me have all three declared that the circumstances here stated are strictly true. The boy was altogether about five months with Sanaollah and his servants from the time they got him; and he had been taken about four months and a half before. Janoo further adds, that he, after a month or two, ventured to try a waistband upon the boy, but he often tore it off in distress or anger. After he had become reconciled to this, in about two months he ventured to put upon him a vest and pair of trousers. He had great difficulty in making him keep them on, with threats and occasional beatings. He would disencumber himself of them whenever left alone, but put them on again in alarm when discovered; and, to the last, often injured or destroyed them by rubbing them against trees or posts, like a beast, when any part of his body itched. This habit he could never break him of.

"I can discover, however," adds the narrator of the above statement, "no well-established instance of a man, who had been nurtured in a wolf's den, having been found. There is, at Lucknow, an old man, who was found in the Oude Tarai when a lad, by the hut of an old hermit who had died. He is supposed to have been taken from wolves by this old hermit. The trooper who discovered him brought him to the king, some forty years ago, and he has been ever since supported in comfort, being still called the 'wild man of the woods.' He was one day sent to me at my request, and I talked with him. His features indicate him to be of the Tharoo tribe, who are found only in that forest. He is very inoffensive, speaks little, and that little imperfectly; and he is still impatient of intercourse with his fellow-men, particularly with such as are disposed to tease him with questions. That he was found as a wild boy in the forest there can be no doubt; but I do not feel at all sure that he ever lived with wolves."

The correspondent of the "Delhi Gazette" goes on to state that other instances have occurred of boys being carried off by wolves, and yet afterwards found alive; but he gives us no facts in

support of this assertion. The probability is, that the boy in question was one of those wild tenants of the forest who have at various periods been found even in Europe, although the narrative, as given above, has possibly been coloured by the natives.

It may have been in some such circumstance as that now detailed that the superstition of the Were-wolf, which haunted the middle ages, had its origin. The Were-wolf, or *lou garoup*, as he was termed in France, was considered to be a sorcerer, who changed himself into the shape and nature of a wolf, worrying and destroying human beings: nor was this an erroneous opinion confined to the ignorant, for in 1598 a man in the Netherlands, charged with this offence, was cruelly put to death. The above extract, therefore, may throw light upon this delusion of antiquity.

#### CURIOSITIES OF RAILWAY LOCOMOTION.

It was a dark night, in the year 1784, that the venerable clergyman in the town of Redruth, in Cornwall, was taking an evening walk in a long and lonely lane which led to his church, when an unearthly noise burst forth, and to his horror he beheld approaching him, at a furious speed, an indescribable creature of legs, arms, and wheels, whose body seemed glowing with internal fires, and whose rapid gasps for breath appeared to indicate some deadly struggle within. The old gentleman shouted lustily for help, and to his great relief he found a friend in the person of a Mr. Murdock, who explained to him that this dreadful monster was in fact a machine for locomotion, generally tractable, though not always so, which he had incautiously allowed to escape from its leading-strings. Such was the strange *début* into its sphere of practical activity which was made by the locomotive engine; and to some facts and curiosities which have transpired in its rapid, remarkable, and potent subsequent career, we have to invite the attention of our readers.

The power of the agent which man has tutored into submissive obedience to himself, in the form of the locomotive engine, is one of its strangest characteristics. The first steam-horses, which weighed five or six tons, and cost some 550*l.*, were thought to be machines of no common power; but they shrink into littleness in contrast with the modern engine, weighing perhaps thirty or forty tons, and capable of drawing after it some thirty passenger carriages, each weighing five tons, at thirty miles an hour. Take, for instance, the "Lord of the Isles," which was exhibited in the Crystal Palace in 1851, and which is but one out of a multitude of kindred giants on the Great Western line, and how tremendous is the force thus submitting to the absolute control of the arm of a man, who curbs its energies at his will. Its effective power is no less than that of 743 horses; its weight, including the laden tender, is more than fifty tons; and it is capable of taking a passenger train of a hundred and twenty tons, at an average speed of sixty miles an hour. Nor is the narrow-gauge behind. There is the "Liverpool," which was lately reposing its giant limbs at Camden

station, weighing of itself thirty-two tons, and evaporating steam, when at full work, equal to 1140 horse-power. Others might be mentioned; but it is enough to say, on behalf of the North Western Company, that they have now in their *dépôts* some engines which clear the 112 miles between London and Birmingham in two hours!

The working of the parts of an engine, when in motion, is in several respects very curious. Suppose, for instance, that the driving-wheels are seven feet in diameter, or seven yards in circumference, and the train be proceeding at the rate of seventy miles an hour—a speed not unfrequent in the expresses on the Great Western Railway—these wheels have to revolve five times in a second, during which they clear thirty-five yards. If two trains pass each other at such a speed, the relative velocity is double that, so that if one of them were seventy yards long, it would flash past in the space of time which elapses between two ticks of a common clock. Now, to accomplish this, it is obvious that some remarkable operations must have been advancing within the train, and especially within the engine itself; and to these we may advert. In order to produce one revolution of the driving wheels, each piston must move backwards and forwards once in the cylinder, and its motion, in the case before us, must therefore divide a second into ten equal parts. On arriving at the end of the cylinder, a valve must be shifted, so as to admit fresh steam on one side the piston, and that it may be withdrawn on the other; and this valve must move so rapidly as to form but a small fraction of the entire stroke of the piston. Nor is this all: for as there are two cylinders, and the mechanism is so regulated that the discharge from the one is intermediate between the two successive discharges from the other, it follows that there are twenty discharges of steam a second, at equal intervals, and each of these is the twentieth part of a second between it and that which precedes and follows it. These may easily be distinguished when an engine is moving slowly, and they vary greatly in kind in different locomotives; but, of course, it is impossible to make any such refined observations when the speed is like that of the kind now supposed.

But the examination may be further pursued. It appears, from the calculations of scientific men, that a cannon-ball propelled from a piece of ordnance moves at the rate of some three hundred miles an hour, or about five miles a minute, which is four times the velocity of a train running at seventy-five miles an hour. Now the heavy broadside guns in a line-of-battle ship in the British navy are nearly all thirty-two pounders, and scarcely any adequate idea can be formed of the destructive power of these masses of iron, when hurled through the air by the aid of the appliances of science and art. But if we wish to compute the momentum of any agent, we have simply to multiply its weight into the speed at which it moves; and when we remember, that while a train runs at a rate only one-fourth that of a cannon-ball, yet as it is incomparably heavier in weight, it is at once seen that the momentum of such a body is immense indeed. Instead of a cannon-ball weighing thirty-two pounds, we have a train weighing some seventy-five tons; that is to say, when we take our seats inside a

train which is to proceed at such a speed, we are embarking in an agent which will have a momentum equal to that of a cannon-ball of about eighteen tons weight flying through the air. Were some catastrophe to divert such a body from its proper course against a mass of solid rock, such as is to be found at the entrance of many tunnels, we should strike it with a force equal to the aggregate momentum which would be produced by the united and simultaneous discharge at that point, of the broadsides of some twenty-six line-of-battle ships! To sit astride the largest cannon-ball ever fired—omitting only the exposure to the breeze—is nothing, in contrast with the tremendous power with which we thus associate ourselves in journeying over the country in such a vehicle as an express train on the Great Western Railway. Yet how strange is the thought of the calm composure with which the fairest and the weakest in the land recline amid the cushions which give ease and comfort to the movements of this iron monster!

The rapid motion which is imparted to every portion of the machinery of a train is such, that astonishing momentum is acquired by even the least significant parts. Of this some idea will be gained from the fact—which we have on the authority of Mr. Mc'Connell, the locomotive superintendent of the southern division of the North Western Railway—that through a diminution by only one-third of the weight of the piston-rods of one of his new engines, the whole fabric is relieved of a momentum—when the train is proceeding at full speed—of no less than eighty tons. This fact will also serve to indicate the immensity of the strain constantly acting on the machinery, and to show the supreme importance of maintaining the whole in most perfect working condition, since the giving way of a nut or a screw may lead to the most disastrous consequences.

Many curious facts have transpired in connection with the wear and tear of the rails on which the trains run. The amount of iron thus employed is enormous. If we assume that the average weight required on our lines for this purpose is about seventy pounds a yard, which is, we believe, a fair estimate, and allowing twenty pounds for each of the chairs, besides a sufficient allowance for bolts, pins, fishes, and sidings, it is computed that not less than 600 tons of iron are required for each mile of railway throughout the country. Now as some 7000 miles are open for public traffic, it follows that not less than 4,200,000 tons are thus consumed. The net cost of a mile of the permanent way on the North Western line, with eighty-two pound rails, is about 2035*l*. The durability of this very costly part of our railways has involved many considerations of interest. In 1849, a report was made to the directors of the London and North Western Railway in reference to the probable duration of the permanent way. In this it was stated that the actual average age of the road was then seven years and a half, and that it might be reckoned to be capable of lasting twelve years and a half longer, making a total of twenty years for its whole duration. Now the average number of trains daily running over the line is estimated at fifty, or 18,250 annually, which being continued for twenty years, we have some 365,000 trains as the traffic necessary to wear out the line.

Curious as are many of the facts connected with railway locomotion, it will frequently be found that not the least curious are the travellers themselves. There are those remarkable individuals who have such eccentric ideas in reference to the agency by whose power they are conveyed from one part of the country to another, as to think that engines are something between clock-work and gunpowder, and that they are altogether very dangerous things to play with, since they have innate and inveterate propensities to run away, or to rush from the rails in the middle of the highest possible embankments, for mere purposes of self-destruction. Then there are others, who are always in such extreme anxiety in reference to the safety of their luggage, which they would scarcely consider safe in the custody of any number of railway officials; those, too, who never start on a journey without making silly puns for the amusement of themselves and company, and who, when the guard tries to put another passenger into a carriage which is already crammed, call out, "We're full inside!" in order that they may have the opportunity of adding, that "that is just what Charles Lamb used to say after he had eaten oyster-pie." There are also gentlemen who are learned in all matters about "the rail," who talk profoundly about gradients which are 1 in 16,810, and very extraordinary curves on lines on which they have travelled, and engines and drivers and accidents. One of this class was not long since travelling on the North Western line, and on the train arriving at Watford it was detained for a short time for the repair of a slight accident which had occurred to the engine. This gentleman could not, of course, think of waiting in his carriage till the train started again, but rushed out in order to ascertain the whole history and mystery of the affair.

"What's the matter, station-master?" he exclaimed energetically and authoritatively. "You've no business to stop here; it isn't down in the time-bill, you know!"

"It's merely a slight accident to the engine," replied the official.

"Indeed!" was the reply; "an accident indeed. Pray what's the nature of it?"

The station-master knew his man, and seeing that a little learned lingo would suit best, replied, in his blandest tones: "Oh, it's quite unimportant: it's only one of the cylinder-covers has got into the blast-pipe, and we are afraid it should be blown out of the top of the chimney!" to accomplish which, if there had been any possibility of such an accident, it would have been necessary for a wooden framing, some two feet and a half long by one and a half square, to insert itself in a tube about three inches in diameter. It was an explanation about as practicable as if a coachman were to say that he had been delayed on his journey by the leader getting into the hind-boot, and he was afraid that the coach would be tipped up if he were not extricated. In the present case, however, the announcement was abundantly satisfactory, and the inquirer rushed off to his *coupée* to satisfy the anxious misgivings of his companions with the intelligence.\*

\* The above probably passed for wit with the station-master; but we confess that we cannot see the merit

Before concluding this subject, a remark will not be inappropriate in reference to the anticipations which some have held out of an entire change in our system of locomotion. The rapid discoveries which have been made in the progress of science, and the application on a small scale of new motive-agents which it has been attempted to adopt, as more potent and more facile of command than those now employed, have raised the confident expectation that steam will be altogether superseded. The history of science in the past may well teach a lesson of caution as to the predictions which any may be inclined to offer in reference to the future, while the success which has been already attained has stimulated many to the expression of great hope and confidence. Some there are who have already begun to speak of the waning glories of the railway system, and they express painful misgivings in the anticipation of that period when the full tide of the current of traffic shall be borne along other channels than those through which it now flows.

In looking to the facts of the case, it is worthy of remark that whatever improvements may arise, their nature and their results will depend upon two considerations. It is obvious that if men travel at all, it must be either on land or in the air. Whether the latter will ever be the general route, we shall not attempt to determine. But if we are to keep to *terra firma*, it seems to be an essential condition that whatever the agency by which we may be impelled, the shortest and straightest roads must be the best. And if we are to pass over the ground, we shall still have to look to wheels and rails as the means for accomplishing this with the least amount of friction. The question, then, which remains to be answered is this—Can some more powerful and secure agency be provided to do the work of our locomotives? Now, whether we look to galvanism, to gas, or to air, it is plain that whatever aspires to supersede our steam-horses, can only succeed by the possession of some very decided advantages in power, speed, and economy. The vast, costly, and elaborate organization of our present machinery, its factories, and other establishments, will not be deserted till the new agent shall have vindicated its claims. When this shall be the case, all may hail its advent with gladness; and, though it may be we shall view with a kind of sorrowful interest the destruction of our locomotives, yet we may look forward with hope rather than with misgivings to the time when other means shall be placed within our reach of promoting still further those high and beneficial results which have been, by our railway system, so eminently attained. Whatever, however, in these or other respects the future may reveal, we will say with the poet:—

"In spite of all that beauty may disown  
In your harsh features, Nature doth embrace  
Her lawful offspring in man's art; and Time,  
Pleased with your triumphs o'er his brother Space,  
Accepts from your bold hands the proffer'd crown  
Of Hope, and smiles on you with cheer sublime."†

of a joke which had exaggeration and falsehood for its basis.—Ed.  
† Wordsworth.



## A REMARKABLE ESCAPE.

PERIODS of persecution have singularly illustrated this providential care of God for his people. In such times his hand has been as it were visibly stretched out, protecting them from the fury of their enemies, and rescuing them when all hope of deliverance from man seemed to have terminated. Instead of ranging over the wide field of illustration presented by ecclesiastical history, we shall confine ourselves to some incidents connected with the long and cruel severities practised by the Roman Catholics of France upon the Protestants in that kingdom.

On one occasion the prince of Condé and Admiral Coligny—the leaders of the Huguenot party—had been driven from their homes by their opponents, who had attempted cruelly to massacre them; they took to flight accordingly with their helpless and terrified families. “The prince of Condé set out silently,” says Matthieu, an eye-witness of the events he narrates, “but his situation touched all hearts with pity, when they saw the first prince of the blood setting forward in the intensest and extremest heat, with his wife on the point of giving birth to a child, and three little children borne after them, followed by the now motherless family of Coligny, of whom only one was able to walk. The wife of D’Andelot, too, was there with her little girl only two years old, and several other ladies. The only escort for this troop of helpless women and children was one hundred and fifty soldiers, headed by the two brave and affectionate fathers.

“They journeyed on as rapidly as possible, for their only hope of safety lay in crossing the Loire before they could be overtaken, and then seeking shelter in Rochelle; but the whole country was filled with hostile troops, and the bridges over the Loire were already occupied. They therefore determined to attempt a ford not commonly known, and arrived at it when the river, usually broad and furious, was so far diminished by the long drought that they crossed without difficulty, the prince carrying his youngest infant on his arm, clasped to his bosom. But scarcely had they reached the southern bank, when turning round they discovered the cavalry of their enemies in full pursuit, crowding rapidly upon the opposite side. An event now happened certainly very remarkable. Without any apparent cause, a sudden swell of waters came foaming and rushing down the stream, and in an instant filling the channel, rendered the ford impassable, and the defenceless company were thus rescued from the jaws of their destroyer. Can we wonder that men taught to rest upon Providence, and discern the Almighty hand in the events of their agitated lives, should have regarded this as a signal interposition in their favour, and an undoubted sign that his arm was extended for their preservation?”

This fact rests not upon the Protestant historians alone. In its main features it is abundantly confirmed by contemporary Roman Catholic writers; among the rest by the Jesuit Davila.

On several occasions the life of admiral Coligny was attempted by assassination, but it was as marvellously preserved as it had been in the above instance.—“*Remarkable Escapes from Perils*”—a Monthly Volume of the Religious Tract Society.

## NEVER CROSS A BRIDGE UNTIL YOU COME TO IT.

“NEVER cross a bridge until you come to it!” was the counsel usually given by a patriarch in the ministry to troubled and over-careful Christians. Are you troubled about the future? Do you see difficulties rising in the Alpine range along your path? Are you alarmed at the state of your business—at the uncertainties hanging over your life—at the dubious prospects in reserve for your children—at the gloomy contingencies which fancy sketches, and invests with a sort of life-like reality—at the obstructions wicked men present to the progress of the Redeemer’s cause? Do not cross that bridge until you come to it. Perhaps you will never have occasion to cross it; and if you do, you may find that a timid imagination has over-rated greatly the toil to be undergone, or has underrated the power of that grace which can lighten the Christian’s every labour. In approaching the Notch of the White Mountains from one direction, the traveller finds himself in the midst of conical hills, which seem to surround him as he advances, and forbid further progress. He can see but a short distance along his winding road; it seems as if his journey must stop abruptly at the base of these barriers. He begins to think of turning back his horse, to escape from hopeless inclosure among impassable barriers; but let him advance, and he finds that the road curves around the frowning hill before him, and leads him into other and still other straits, from which he finds escape simply by advancing. Every new discovery of a passage around the obstructions of his path teaches him to hope in the practicability of his road. He cannot see far ahead at any time; but a passage discovers itself as he advances. He is required neither to turn back, nor to scale the steep sides of towering hills. His road winds along, preserving for miles almost an exact level. He finds that nothing is gained by crossing a bridge before he comes to it. Such is often the journey of life. How much of its toilsome ruggedness would be relieved by careful attention to the above admonition! “Never cross a bridge until you come to it!” Or, to express the same counsel in a form that does not involve the charge of a Hibernicism, “Be careful for nothing; but in everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep (garrison) your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

THOUGHTS BY THE WAY.—One remark of Abp. Leighton’s was, “That he loved a life divided between *ascending* up to heaven to procure blessings, and *descending* to diffuse them on earth!” What a blessed life for a servant of God, to be thus employed while on earth, receiving good and dispensing good to all around, every action connected with life eternal.

Prayer like precious metal, comes most pure from the heated furnace.

The petition for heavenly things is the only key that must open the door to our petitions for temporals.

Meditation is the nurse of prayer.

## Varieties.

**WALKING UNDER WATER.**—Among the marvels of the day must be reckoned M. de Saint Simon Sicard's invention of an apparatus which permits the possessor to take a half-hour's promenade at the bottom of a river, and there occupy himself as fancy suggests—from chatting with mermaids to rescuing "moist bodies." M. Grandchamp made a public experiment the other day, and remained thirty-five minutes at the bottom of the Seine. This is all we can learn of the construction of the apparatus:—A complete clothing of caoutchouc from head to foot, including a helmet and sock, allows the wearer to descend below the water without danger of contact; the helmet has a valve which allows the air to escape at the moment of submersion; and no sooner is this submersion complete than the pressure of the water closes the valve hermetically. A provision of air to be inspired is carried in a box, placed like a hump in the back of the cuirass of caoutchouc. This box has a tube which carries the air into the helmet, in order that the breathing may take place without effort; and a little stop-cock enables the distribution of air to be regulated at pleasure. No sooner is there difficulty of breathing than the signal is given, and the experimenter is brought to the surface once more.

**DEATH FROM WANT OF SLEEP.**—A Mr. Lynton, some time ago, made a communication to the Asiatic Society of London, descriptive of a mode of punishment peculiar to the criminal code of China. A Chinese merchant, named Hiamly, accused and convicted of having killed his wife, was sentenced to die by the total deprivation of sleep. The execution took place at Amoy. The condemned was placed in prison under the surveillance of three guardians who relieved each other every alternate hour, and who prevented him from taking any sleep, night or day. He lived thus for nineteen days, without having sleep for a single minute. At the commencement of the eighth day his sufferings were so cruel, that he begged, as a great favour, that they would kill him by strangulation.

**A GLASS MONUMENT.**—The popularity of glass as a building material, arising out of Sir Joseph Paxton's crystal palace and conservatories, will cause glass to be employed in a thousand ways to which no one dreamt it was applicable a few years ago. The Prussians have just resolved to make it serve for public monuments. A column consisting entirely of glass, placed on a pedestal of Carrara marble and surmounted by a statue of Peace six feet high, by the celebrated sculptor Rauch, is about to be erected in the Garden of Peace at Potsdam. The shaft will be ornamented with spiral lines of blue and white.

**HOW THEY TRAVEL IN NUBIA.**—In a recent letter from Southern Nubia, published in the "Tribune," Bayard Taylor thus writes about the delights and peculiarities of dromedary-riding:—"I found dromedary-riding not at all difficult. One sits on a very lofty seat, with his feet crossed over the animal's shoulders or resting on his neck. The body is obliged to rock backward and forward, on account of the long swinging gait; and as there is no stay or fulcrum, except a blunt pommel, around which the legs are crossed, some little power of equilibrium is necessary. My dromedary was a strong, stately beast, of a light cream colour, and so even a gait that it would bear the Arab test—that is, one might drink a cup of coffee, while going on a full trot, without spilling a drop. I found a great advantage in the use of the Turkish costume. My trowsers, which contain eighteen yards of muslin, though they only reach to the knees, allow the leg perfect freedom of motion; and I have already learned so many different modes of crossing those members that no day is sufficient to exhaust them. The rising and kneeling of the animal is hazardous at first, as his long legs double together like a carpenter's rule, and you are thrown backward, and then forward, and then backward again; but the trick of it is soon learned. The soreness and fatigue of which many travellers complain, I have not experienced. I ride from eight to ten hours a day, read and even dream in the saddle, and am as fresh and unwearied as when I began the journey."

**THE ELECTRIC LIGHT.**—The Electric Power and Colour Company may be said lately to have accomplished the feat of "setting" the Thames on fire." One of the Citizen steamers started from Chelsea at eight P.M. for Gravesend, carrying an electric lamp, with a parabolic reflector, on each paddle-box, and returning to town at three A.M. The lamps intensely illuminated both banks of the river, shedding a flood of light on the objects and edifices in the way, including the Chelsea College, both Houses of Parliament, St. Paul's, and Greenwich Hospital. The effect, as seen from the several bridges, is said to have been remarkably striking and beautiful. The shipping in the port below London Bridge, was as conspicuously seen as in the light of day—a most important fact in relation to the subject of safety to life at sea, and the national question of a perfect system of lighthouses on the British coast.

**EXTRAORDINARY NIDIFICATION.**—Our readers are familiar with the tall signal-posts at railway stations, up which large balls are run by pulleys and cords, to intimate, by their being lowered or elevated, when the way is or is not clear for a coming train. One of these balls, at the signal-post on the Ardrossan line near Kilwinning, lately attracted the notice of a couple of starlings "on matrimonial thoughts intent." With much labour, they forced their way into the centre, and proceeded, despite all interruptions, to construct a nest. The ball has to be lowered and elevated fourteen times a day, but this did not interfere with the proceedings of the happy pair, and in due time four eggs were deposited in the moveable nest. Our last despatch informs us that the female is still sitting closely, quite undisturbed by the frequent process of being let down within a few feet of the ground, and raised again. There is every probability of her hatching her young, and, if so, we believe the circumstance will be unprecedented.—*Dumfries Courier.*

**FATTENING YOUNG LADIES IN TUNIS.**—Colonel Keating, in his "Travels in Europe and Asia," mentions the following singular marriage custom in Tunis. A girl, after she is betrothed, is cooped up in a small room, with shackles of gold and silver upon her ankles and wrists. If she is to be married to a man who has discharged, dispatched, or lost a former wife, the shackles which the former wife wore are put upon the new bride's limbs, and she is fed till they are filled up to the proper thickness. The food used for this custom, worthy of barbarians, is a seed called *drough*, which is of extraordinary fattening quality. With this seed, and their national dish, *cuscussoo*, the bride is literally crammed, and many actually die under the spoon.

**ART OF SWIMMING.**—Men are drowned by raising their arms above the water, the unbuoyed weight of which depresses the head. Other animals have neither motion nor ability to act in a similar manner, and therefore swim naturally. When a man falls into deep water, he will rise to the surface, and will continue there if he does not elevate his hands. If he move his hands under water in any way he pleases, his head will rise so high as to allow him free liberty to breathe; and if he will use his legs as in the act of walking, or rather walking up-stairs, his shoulders will rise above the water, so that he may use less exertion with his hands, or apply them to some other purpose. These plain directions are recommended to the recollection of those who have not learned to swim in their youth, as they may be found highly advantageous in preserving life.

**REMEDY FOR THE AMERICAN BLIGHT ON APPLE TREES.**—A correspondent writing to us on the similarity between the "Oidium Tuckeri," or grape plague, which was recently referred to in these columns, and the American apple-tree blight, states that, after many trials, he has found an effectual antidote to it. He prepared a paint or wash of common clay and water, and applied it by means of a brush to the diseased parts. Sometimes the first washing had the desired effect, but the second or third invariably removed the blight. Our correspondent throws out the suggestion that the same remedy may prove equally efficacious in the case of the grape-vine.